



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON DC

28 MAR 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL MAJCOM-FOA-DRU/CV

FROM: HQ USAF/DP  
1040 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20330-1040

SUBJECT: Policy Memorandum - Payment of Expenses to Obtain Professional Credentials  
(Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Civilian Personnel Policy) Memo, 17 Aug 02, Payment of Expenses to Obtain Professional Credentials)

The Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Civilian Personnel Policy), issued policy for implementing the payment of expenses to obtain professional credentials on 17 Jun 02 (Attachment 2) pursuant to Section 1112 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 (Public Law 107-107). The policy permits agencies to pay expenses for employees to obtain and renew professional credentials, including expenses for professional accreditation, state- or municipally-imposed professional licenses, professional certifications, and examinations to obtain such credentials. Licensing and certification are defined in the DoD memo. Organizations are required to offset any costs from within existing funding authority. The policy does not change federal acquisition law and policy.

This memo transmits Air Force policy implementing references a and b of the attached policy. This policy memorandum will expire when superseded by an implementing Air Force publication or within 120 calendar days of this memo, whichever is sooner. Please ensure local bargaining unit obligations are met prior to implementation. Our point of contact is Mr. Bill Swigert, AF/DPLEC, DSN 225-5569, email: bill.swigert@pentagon.af.mil.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Roger M. Blanchard", is positioned above the typed name.

ROGER M. BLANCHARD  
Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff,  
Personnel

Attachments:

1. Air Force Policy
2. DASD(CPP) Memo, 17 Jun 02

cc:

ALMAJCOM-FOA-DRU/DP/DPC/DPE  
SAF/MRM

## **Air Force Policy on Payment of Expenses to Obtain Professional Credentials**

- References: (a) Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Civilian Personnel Policy) Memo, 17 August 2002, Payment of Expenses to Obtain Professional Credentials
- (b) Section 1112 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002, Public Law 107-107, amending Title 5, United States Code, Section 5757
- (c) DoD 5500.7-R, The Joint Ethics Regulation (JER), second amendment, 25 March 1996

The Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Civilian Personnel Policy), DASD(CPP), has delegated the authority to implement and approve payment of expenses to obtain professional licenses and credentials to the Department of the Air Force. The Secretary of the Air Force delegated the authority to Commanders of Major Commands, Field Operating Agencies, and Direct Reporting Units. This authority may be further delegated in writing. The attached DASD(CPP) policy will be used along with the following Air Force implementing policy.

a. This authority may not be exercised on behalf of any employee "occupying or seeking to qualify for appointment to any position that is excepted from the competitive service because of the confidential, policy-determining, policy-making, or policy-advocating character of the position", i.e., schedule C appointees, and non-career Senior Executives. This policy applies to all Air Force activities, including Air National Guard (ANG) (Title 5) and Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC) units, excluding Air National Guard (Title 32), active duty military personnel, local national (LN) and non-appropriated fund (NAF) employees.

b. This is not an entitlement. Continued payment of expenses associated with licenses and certification is discretionary and not guaranteed. As an employer, the Air Force's first priority is to pay for expenses associated with licenses and certification when it is required by appropriate local, state, or federal government authority to perform the work required by an employee's position. Approving officials may also use this authority in support of Air Force human capital goals under the following criteria:

- (1) Enhances productivity
- (2) Improves performance
- (3) Maximizes recruitment opportunities, especially for shortage category occupations and other labor market conditions
- (4) Increases retention, especially for "high turnover" career fields
- (5) Broadens and develops the skill base for a quality work force to accomplish the Air Force's mission and ensure readiness
- (6) Supports civilian leadership development initiatives and career path improvements to meet future requirements, as determined by Air Force senior functional leaders.

c. Approving officials shall ensure that criteria for payment of expenses to obtain licenses and professional credentials are applied consistent with merit system principles as set forth in 5 U.S.C. § 2301.

d. No additional Air Force funds have been allocated for payment of expenses to obtain professional licenses or credentials. PEC 88751 civilian training funds will not be used to pay such expenses, unless a license or certification is incidental to training appropriately funded by PEC 88751. Organizations are required to offset any costs from within existing funding authority.

e. Payment for licenses and certifications, and their subsequent renewals, will be by reimbursement. Payments may include, at the approving official's discretion, reimbursement for such additional expenses as membership fees [if the fee is a necessary cost directly related to training to obtain a license or certification, or payment of the fee is a condition precedent to undergoing the training (*Comp Gen B-223447, October 10, 1986*)], fees for preparation for examinations, examinations, registration fees, and travel and per diem costs. Payments may be made for licenses or certifications issued on or subsequent to the date of the Air Force policy memorandum and may not be made retroactively. Reimbursement of expenses covered under this authority will only be made if the employee had prior written approval to incur the expenses from the activity responsible for making the reimbursement indicating that funds would be available when the reimbursement is to be made. An employee may not, by self-nomination, incur expenses under this authority and demand reimbursement. Employees must submit the following documentation to the appropriate official for reimbursement:

- (1) Approved SF-1164, Claim for Reimbursement of Expenditures on Official Business
- (2) Receipt that confirms proof of payment to the organization that administers the test
- (3) Proof that the examination was completed and passed
- (4) Disclosure of any reimbursement previously received from the Air Force for the same certification or license.

f. Unless permitted by law or regulations, officials may not establish minimum qualification requirements based upon the presence or absence of a license or certification.

g. Officials may not use this authority to obtain licenses or certifications from organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, parental status, or disability.

h. Excused absence for taking exams may be granted according to AFI 36-815, Absence and Leave, 5 Sep 02, paragraph 8.6.

i. In preparing for or maintaining a license or professional certification, employees must comply with DoD and Air Force policies on personal use of government resources.

j. Implementation of this policy must be accomplished in accordance with all statutory and contractual labor relations obligations.

k. Air Force will issue separate instructions on recording payment for licenses and professional credentials in the Modern Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS). Until these instructions are issued, information will be recorded using Attachment 2 of the referenced DASD(CPP) policy and kept on file by the approving official. This information will not be posted in the employee's official personnel file. At a later date, approving officials will be requested to submit this data to the appropriate office for input into DCPDS.

l. This policy supersedes paragraph 2.3.2. of AFI 36-401, Employee Training and Development, 28 June 2002.

The point of contact for payment of expenses to obtain professional credentials is Bill Swigert, (703) 695-5569 or DSN 225-5569, email: [bill.swigert@pentagon.af.mil](mailto:bill.swigert@pentagon.af.mil).



OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

17 JUN 2002

FORCE MANAGEMENT  
POLICY

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Payment of Expenses to Obtain Professional Credentials

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002, Public Law 107-107, Section 1112, Chapter 23 of Title 5, United States Code, 5757, permits agencies to pay for expenses for employees to obtain and renew professional credentials, including expenses for professional accreditation, State-imposed and professional licenses, and professional certifications, and examinations to obtain such credentials. This Department of Defense (DoD) initiative creates a recruitment and retention incentive. DoD's implementing policy (attachment 1) provides Component discretion in paying for professional credentials and related expenses.

The Modern Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS) will be modified to provide essential data for program evaluation. Specific data (attachment 2) must be retained until the Modern DCPDS accommodates these new requirements. The Civilian Personnel Management Service will disseminate notification of changes to the modern DCPDS via a systems patch release email.

My point of contact is Jeanne Raymos, (703) 695-7901, email  
Jeanne.N.Raymos@osd.mil.

  
Ginger Grobler  
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense  
Civilian Personnel Policy

Attachments:  
As stated

DISTRIBUTION: ASSISTANT G-1 (CIVILIAN PERSONNEL)  
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY  
(CIVILIAN PERSONNEL/EEO)

DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE  
(FORCE MANAGEMENT AND PERSONNEL)  
DIRECTOR FOR MANPOWER AND PERSONNEL (J-1),  
JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
DIRECTOR, PERSONNEL AND SECURITY,  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INSPECTOR GENERAL  
DIRECTOR, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT,  
DEFENSE COMMISSARY AGENCY  
CHIEF, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT DIVISION,  
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CHIEF, CIVILIAN PERSONNEL DIVISION, DEFENSE  
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BUREAU

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DoD) POLICY  
CIVILIAN LICENSES, CERTIFICATIONS, AND RELATED EXPENSES**

**A. REFERENCES**

1. Title 5, United States Code, section 5757, enacted by section 1112 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002.
2. Chapter 23 of title 5, United States Code

**B. BACKGROUND**

1. Prior to enactment of 5 U.S.C. § 5757 (reference (1)), the Comptroller General had interpreted federal law as prohibiting payment for expenses related to licenses and certifications. There were exceptions for requirements established in law or for qualifications set by the Office of Personnel Management.
2. Section 5757 now permits agencies to use appropriated funds or funds otherwise available to the agency to pay for "expenses for employees [in any federal pay system] to obtain professional credentials, including expenses for professional accreditation, State-imposed and professional licenses, and professional certification; and examinations to obtain such credentials." This authority may not be exercised on behalf of any employee "occupying or seeking to qualify for appointment to any position that is excepted from the competitive service because of the confidential, policy-determining, policy-making, or policy-advocating character of the position." This authority is discretionary on the part of agencies and is not an entitlement or benefit of employment.

**C. DEFINITIONS**

1. Licensing is the process by which an agency of [federal, state, or local] government grants permission to an individual to engage in a given occupation upon finding that the applicant has attained the minimal degree of competency required to engage in that occupation.
2. Certification is recognition given to individuals who have met predetermined qualifications set by an agency of government, industry, or a profession.

3. DoD Components are the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and other organizational entities of the Department of Defense.

#### D. POLICY

1. Heads of DoD Components with appointing authority may approve payment for licenses, certifications, and related expenses consistent with this policy. This authority may be redelegated in writing.
2. The Director, Washington Headquarters Services (WHS), is delegated the authority to approve payment for licenses, certifications, and related expenses, consistent with this policy, for the Office of the Secretary of Defense and those organizations receiving civilian personnel services from WHS.
3. Use of this authority shall be consistent with any collective bargaining obligations.
4. Components may use this authority where it is beneficial to the systematic development and enhanced job performance of employees in support of Administration management objectives, Departmental national security, or Component mission imperatives and goals. Components shall develop criteria for implementation of this authority and provide those criteria to the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Civilian Personnel Policy.
5. Payment for licenses and certifications, and their subsequent renewals, may include, at the Component's discretion, such additional expenses as membership fees, fees for preparation for examinations, examinations, registration fees, and travel and per diem costs.
6. Components shall ensure that criteria for payment of expenses to obtain professional credentials are applied consistent with merit system principles as set forth in 5 U.S.C. § 2301. All criteria shall be reviewed at regular intervals, as established by each Component.
7. Unless permitted by law or regulations, Components may not establish minimum qualification requirements based upon the presence or absence of a license or certification.



8. Components may not use this authority to obtain licenses or certifications from organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, parental status, or disability.
9. Components shall use the Modern Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS) for recording payments for licenses, certifications, and related expenses. The Modern DCPDS will be used to evaluate such payments.

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DoD) POLICY  
CIVILIAN LICENSES, CERTIFICATIONS, AND RELATED EXPENSES  
MODERN DEFENSE CIVILIAN PERSONNEL DATA SYSTEM**

Data elements:

License/Certificate

Use the same list of values as in HR Conditions  
of Employment.

Date License/Certificate  
Obtained

Initial Annual/Renewal

Cost of License/Certificate

Cumulative

Date Paid

Amount Paid

Training for certificate/license

Attachment 2